

# **Farm Direct Marketing: Know the Regulations General Legislation**



*Alberta*   
Government

**Published by:**

Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development  
Rural Development Division  
7000 - 113 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5T6

**Copyright ©2014.** All rights reserved by her Majesty the Queen in Right of Alberta (Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development).

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without written permission from the Rural Development Division, Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development.

**Disclaimer:** Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development has made every reasonable effort to ensure the accuracy of the information in this booklet. It is the responsibility of the producer and/or processor to ensure that their products, practices and facilities meet legislative requirements. As legislation is subject to change and interpretation, it is recommended that farm direct marketers consult the provincial and federal enforcement agencies to ensure compliance.

Funding for this publication is provided by *Growing Forward 2, a federal, provincial, territorial initiative.*

**Copies of this publication are available from:**

Publications Office  
Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development  
Telephone: 1-800-292-5697 (toll-free in Canada)  
Edmonton: (780) 427-0391  
E-mail: [publications.office@gov.ab.ca](mailto:publications.office@gov.ab.ca)

Website: [www.agriculture.alberta.ca/publications](http://www.agriculture.alberta.ca/publications) for information on other publications

# General Legislation Overview

---

Farm direct marketing is the sale of food products directly to the consumer at a farmers' market, roadside stand, farm store, u-pick operation or public market, on-line or through community-supported agriculture (CSA). Successful farm direct marketing involves consistently supplying safe, high-quality products in a clean, customer-friendly environment that supports the development of a trust relationship between you (the supplier) and your customers.

Producers and processors should be aware of the federal and provincial legislative requirements that must be met for producing and marketing agri-food products. Agri-food products are those food products that are made using agricultural products, ingredients or processes. You need to know and adhere to the legislation that applies to your farm direct marketing operation. Failure to comply with the legislation may lead to fines or other penalties and possibly, to decreased sales.

You also need to be aware that the rules change depending on the marketing channel. What is an acceptable, even desirable, product at a farmers' market may not be allowed for sale to a restaurant, public market or on-line. For example, your free-range chickens that sell out at the market cannot be sold to a restaurant if you do not have quota. Requirements for licences, permits, packaging, grading and inspection vary with the avenue used to get your product to market.

Legislation also has different requirements for the construction and operation of the facilities used to produce your products. For example, fruit syrup made in a home kitchen can only be sold at an Alberta approved farmers' market. If you want to sell it in a gift basket, the product has to be processed in a licensed food establishment. If the gift baskets are being shipped out of the province, you will need to be using a processing facility that is federally registered.



# Contents

---

<b>Introduction to General Legislation .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Federal Legislation .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>Food and Drugs Act and Regulations.....</i>	<b>2</b>
<i>Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act and Regulations .....</i>	<b>3</b>
<i>Safe Food for Canadians Act.....</i>	<b>3</b>
<i>Canada Agricultural Products Act and Regulations .....</i>	<b>3</b>
<i>Weights and Measures Act and Regulations .....</i>	<b>4</b>
<b>Provincial Legislation .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<i>Public Health Act and Food Regulation .....</i>	<b>6</b>
<i>Animal Health Act and Regulations .....</i>	<b>7</b>
<i>Bee Act and Regulation .....</i>	<b>7</b>
<i>Dairy Industry Act and Regulation.....</i>	<b>8</b>
<i>Livestock and Livestock Products Act and Regulations.....</i>	<b>9</b>
<i>Livestock Industry Diversification Act and Regulation.....</i>	<b>9</b>
<i>Marketing of Agricultural Products Act and Regulations.....</i>	<b>10</b>
<i>Meat Inspection Act and Regulation.....</i>	<b>11</b>
<b>Food Safety .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>On-Farm Food Safety Programs .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Prerequisite Programs.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Additional Resources .....</b>	<b>13</b>



# Introduction to General Legislation

---

This booklet highlights sections of the pertinent legislation that apply to the production, processing and sale of all food products regardless of where and how they are sold. As a producer or processor who direct markets agri-food products, you need to become familiar with all the legislation that applies to your operation.

It is important to remember that federal law takes precedence over provincial law, which, in turn, takes precedence over municipal bylaws. Different acts and regulations often work together to define requirements.

An act is a written law or statute that has been enacted by a legislative body such as Parliament or the Legislative Assembly. A regulation, sometimes referred to as subordinate legislation, defines the application and enforcement of an act and is made under the authority of the act.

Both pieces of legislation have an effect on your business. In some cases, the regulation may be more pertinent, such as the Food Regulation under the *Public Health Act*. *The Public Health Act* does not directly address farmers' markets, but the Food Regulation contains an entire Part that outlines the requirements for a market.

## Federal Legislation

---

Federal government departments have complementary roles in developing, interpreting and enforcing legislation and policies:

- Health Canada (HC) administers and develops legislation that has a direct impact on the health and safety of Canadians. HC establishes regulations and standards relating to the safety and nutritional quality of food sold.
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) is responsible for legislation related to agriculture and food. AAFC provides information and support to help industry understand regulatory requirements in order to get innovative foods into the marketplace.
- The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is responsible for the administration and enforcement of food-related acts and regulations. The CFIA verifies industry compliance through inspection, surveillance, sampling and testing.
- Measurement Canada is responsible for ensuring the integrity and accuracy of measurement in the marketplace. It sets, implements and monitors the rules for trade measurement, certifies measuring devices and investigates complaints.

The federal laws that apply to agri-food products include the following:

- *Food and Drugs Act* and Regulations
- *Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act* and Regulations
- *Safe Food for Canadians Act*
- *Canada Agricultural Products Act* and Regulations
- *Weights and Measures Act* and Regulations

## *Food and Drugs Act and Regulations*

The *Food and Drugs Act* (FDA) is the primary legislation for all food sold in Canada. Its purpose is to protect the public against health hazards and fraud from the sale of food (including beverages) by ensuring that products are safe and ingredients are disclosed.

The Act prohibits the handling, selling or advertising of food products in a manner that is false or misleading to consumers or is likely to create an incorrect message regarding the character, value, quantity, composition, merit or safety of the product.

### **What is the FDA?**

The *Food and Drugs Act* (FDA) is the primary legislation for all food sold in Canada.

The FDA regulates the production, import, transport across provincial boundaries and sale of food in Canada. The Act prohibits the use of claims that might suggest that a food is a treatment, preventative or cure for specified diseases or health conditions, unless specified in the Regulations.

The Food and Drug Regulations (FDR) prescribe the general labelling of all prepackaged foods, including requirements for ingredient labelling, nutrition labelling, allergens, durable life dates, nutrient content claims, health claims and foods for special dietary use. It also sets out bilingual labelling requirements. A food product that does not meet the requirements of the Regulations is in violation of the *Food and Drugs Act*.

The scope of the Regulations includes the following:

- advertising and claims
- food standards and compositional requirements
- fortification
- foods for special dietary uses
- food additives
- chemical and microbial hazards
- pesticide and veterinary drug residues
- packaging material

The Regulations set standards for claims on labels or in advertisements as well as the composition of all food products. For example, according to the Regulations, a jam is a product obtained by processing fruit, fruit pulp or canned fruit by boiling to a suitable consistency with water and a sweetening agent.

A named jam such as “Bertha’s Saskatoon Jam” must contain at least 45 per cent saskatoon fruit and 66 per cent water-soluble solids as estimated by a refractometer. The jam may contain added pectin, an approved preservative, an anti-foaming agent and a pH-adjusting agent. The saskatoon jam shall not contain any apple or rhubarb.



## *Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act and Regulations*

The *Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act* (CPLA) provides for a consistent and uniform method of labelling and packaging prepackaged food products sold to consumers. The Act contains provisions regarding the prevention of fraud by prohibiting the making of false or misleading representations by ensuring that products have accurate and meaningful labelling information.

Your label information must be easy to read as well as clearly and prominently displayed. The Regulations stipulate the size and style of lettering and numbering that must appear on the principal display panel of prepackaged products.

Container sizes have been standardized under the Regulations for certain prepackaged foods to prevent consumers from being misled by a wide range of container shapes and sizes.

The *Food and Drugs Act* and the *Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act* and Regulations set out specifications for mandatory label information:

- common name of the product
- net quantity in metric
- dealer (processor or producer) name and mailing address
- list of ingredients in descending order of amount
- durable life date if product has a shelf life of 90 days or less
- nutritional labelling unless exempt
- allergen labelling
- bilingual labelling unless exempt

For more detailed information about labelling requirements, see the Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD) publications *Farm Direct Marketing: Know the Regulations – Food Labels* and *Food Claims, Agdex 844-2 and 844-3*.

## *Safe Food for Canadians Act*

The *Safe Food for Canadians Act* (SFCA) was passed in November 2012 and will come into force in early 2015. The purpose of the Act is to strengthen and modernize Canada's food safety rules, including improvements in food traceability and enhanced requirements for record keeping.

## *Canada Agricultural Products Act and Regulations*

The *Canada Agricultural Products Act* (CAP Act) regulates the import, export and inter-provincial trade of agricultural products. It also provides national standards and grades for agricultural products, their inspection and grading, the registration of establishments and standards governing establishments.

The Act extends the authority of provincial marketing boards to the federal level, so the boards can improve marketing conditions for agricultural commodities through interprovincial and export trade and levy authority.

The Regulations facilitate the marketing of agricultural products by prescribing safety, quality, packaging (including size) and labelling standards. The Regulations also provide for several key aspects:

- the licensing of dealers in agricultural products
- the inspection, grading, labelling and packaging (including standardized sizes) of regulated products
- the standards governing the construction, maintenance and operation of establishments

The following federal regulations fall under the *Canada Agricultural Products Act*:

- Dairy Products Regulations
- Egg Regulations
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Regulations
- Honey Regulations
- Licensing and Arbitration Regulations
- Maple Products Regulations
- Processed Egg Regulations
- Processed Products Regulations
- Livestock and Poultry Carcass Grading Regulations

These regulations stipulate a number of standards specific for each type of agricultural product. For example, under the Honey Regulations, “honey” is the food derived from the nectar of blossoms by the work of honey bees. It cannot be blended with sugar syrup and still be called honey.

A named honey indicates the name of the floral source. For example, if your container is labelled “Strawberry Honey,” then it must be honey produced from bees foraging on strawberry blossoms. It cannot be honey with strawberry flavouring or with added strawberry fruit pulp. Such a product must be labelled as honey flavoured with strawberries or strawberry-flavoured honey.

A true “Strawberry Honey” can only be produced from bees foraging on strawberry blossoms – not by added flavouring or fruit pulp.

## *Weights and Measures Act and Regulations*

Under the *Weights and Measures Act*, weighing and measuring devices, such as scales used for trade in Canada, must meet stringent standards.

The Act requires the following:

- measuring devices be approved for use in Canada
- only approved and certified measuring devices be used in measurement-based sales
- owners and operators ensure their measuring devices function accurately and are not used in a fraudulent manner

- the quantities declared for products bought and sold on the basis of measurement be accurate within prescribed limits
- only units of measurement described in the Act be used in commercial transactions

If you are selling your products on the basis of weight, you are responsible for the accuracy of the scales. You should ensure that your scales meet the following criteria:

- have been approved, inspected, and certified before use – if your device does not already have a valid inspection sticker or certificate, you can obtain one by having the device inspected by Measurement Canada staff or by an authorized service provider
- are appropriate for their intended uses
- are properly installed and protected from environmental interferences
- are used in a manner that ensures accurate measurement
- clearly indicate the weight

## Provincial Legislation

---

Several provincial departments and agencies are responsible for developing and enforcing legislation that pertains to the production and processing of agri-food products:

- Alberta Health sets policy, legislation and standards for public health in Alberta.
- The Environmental Public Health Department of Alberta Health Services (AHS) helps to provide, protect and promote a healthy environment. Public health inspectors/environmental health officers advise and inspect operators to make sure food is prepared safely. AHS is responsible for administering the *Public Health Act*, the Food Regulation and Food Code.
- Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD) is responsible for creating policy and legislation that supports safe and secure food products and production practices throughout the supply chain.

Provincial statutes complement federal legislation and ensure food safety for products under provincial control. In Alberta, the provincial laws that apply to agri-food products include the following:

- *Public Health Act* and Food Regulation
- *Animal Health Act* and Regulations
- *Bee Act* and Regulation
- *Dairy Industry Act* and Regulation
- *Livestock and Livestock Products Act* and Regulations
- *Livestock Industry Diversification Act* and Regulation
- *Marketing of Agricultural Products Act* and Regulations
- *Meat Inspection Act* and Regulation

The Alberta *Public Health Act* is paramount over all other provincial statutes except the Alberta Bill of Rights.

## *Public Health Act and Food Regulation*

The *Alberta Public Health Act* (PHA) is the paramount act, which means that this piece of legislation has power over all other provincial legislation except the Alberta Bill of Rights. The PHA governs all health services in Alberta and protects public health.

The Food Regulation (FR) governs establishments in the province where food intended for public consumption is handled. Food manufacturers, food distributors, grocery stores, food vehicles, restaurants, caterers, farmers' markets, community halls, public markets, bottled water and ice plants, mobile vendors and other food establishments are all governed by this Regulation.

Producers and processors must be aware that only ingredients that come from approved sources can be used in the manufacture and preparation of any food for sale. For example, home-rendered lard cannot be used as an ingredient in any food that will be sold.

Commercial food establishments are required to have a food handling permit and follow the Food Regulation and the Food Retail and Foodservices Code. Operators of Alberta approved farmers' markets require a farmers' market permit. Bed and breakfasts need to have a food handling permit but are exempt from permit fees. Temporary food establishments that operate at special events and community organization functions do not require a permit; however, there are specific requirements in the Regulation that govern such events. Food permits are renewed annually and may be subject to an annual fee.

The Food Regulation deals with commercial food establishments and outlines basic requirements regarding the construction, maintenance and operation of permitted facilities. Establishments must be approved by AHS prior to operation; therefore, you should contact your public health inspector or environmental health officer in the early stages of planning your food business to discuss requirements.

Food safety training is mandatory when operating a commercial food establishment. If you have five or fewer food handlers, the person responsible for the care and control of the establishment must have successfully completed a recognized food sanitation and hygiene training program. If six or more staff are working on the premises at any time, then at least one onsite supervisor must be trained.

The operational requirements for Alberta approved farmers' markets, the duties of a market manager, the requirements of vendors and the food products that are not permitted for sale at a market are also dealt with in the Food Regulation. As a vendor at an approved farmers' market, you do not require a food handling permit. However, you do require a permit if you are also selling at public markets, from home, on-line or to commercial food establishments or are processing at your stall (concession). If you are selling whole fresh fruits and vegetables at a market, to a restaurant, retail outlet or wholesaler, you do not require a food handling permit.

Vendors at approved farmers' markets do not need a food handling permit unless they are also selling at public markets, from home, on-line, to commercial food establishments or processing at their stall.

If you sell your meat at Alberta approved farmers' markets only, you do not require a food handling permit. However, if you wish to sell your meat at the farm gate, from your farm store or to restaurants, institutions and public markets or on-line, you will require a food handling permit for the storage and transport of the meat to your customers. If you handle, repackage, portion or cut any unwrapped product, then these actions are considered to be processing. To process, you will require a distinctly separate area of your home or farm that will be considered a food establishment, and this area must meet all AHS requirements.

Processing can mean actions as simple as handling, re-packaging, portioning or cutting any unwrapped product.

For more information on the legislation that affects the sale of meat and meat products, see the Alberta Agriculture publication *Farm Direct Marketing: Know the Regulations – Meat and Meat Products, Agdex 844-4*.

## *Animal Health Act and Regulations*

The purpose of the *Animal Health Act* (AHA) and Regulations is to minimize the impact of animal diseases in agricultural animals in Alberta as well as to enhance market access, public health and food safety through effective disease control measures. The Act enables a rapid and effective response to an animal disease occurrence by authorizing control measures against disease spread, animal disease surveillance, traceability, carcass disposal provisions, livestock market inspection and licensing as well as the control of the sale of production animal medicines.

The Reportable and Notifiable Diseases Regulation designates certain diseases as “reportable,” meaning they are threats to market access, the economy and/or animal or public health. Occurrences of these diseases require immediate action to control or eradicate them. Diseases designated as “notifiable” will be monitored for trade purposes or to understand their dynamics and epidemiology in Alberta. No actions will be taken.

Under the Traceability Premises Identification Regulation, producers and animal owners must apply for a premises identification account and at least one premises identification number within 30 days of assuming ownership of an animal (except household pets).

## *Bee Act and Regulation*

The *Alberta Bee Act* regulates beekeeping in Alberta. The legislation includes mandatory registration of beekeepers, authority for inspecting bees and beekeeping equipment, controls on bee imports and mechanisms for dealing with problem bees and bee diseases.

You must have a permit from Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD) if you are selling used beekeeping equipment (especially supers and frames). Anyone purchasing beekeeping equipment must inform the Provincial Apiculturist of this purchase within 15 days. If you own bees or beekeeping equipment, you are required to register annually with the Provincial Apiculturist at ARD.

## *Dairy Industry Act and Regulation*

The *Dairy Industry Act* (DIA) and Regulation regulates the production and processing of dairy products, with emphasis on the application of uniform standards relating to product quality and safety. These standards are harmonized with national dairy standards.

Under the legislation:

- “dairy animals” means cows, goats and sheep and other species kept for the purpose of milking
- a “producer” is the person who sells or supplies raw milk that has been produced by one or more dairy animals that the person owns or controls
- a “processor” is a person who processes, for sale, 50 litres or more of milk on any day

Producers and processors of dairy products must hold a producer or processor licence. If you are a producer of milk by animals other than cows, you must be licensed by ARD. If you are producing less than 50 litres of cows’ milk per day, you must be licensed by ARD; if producing more than 50 litres per day, the producer is licensed by Alberta Milk under the *Marketing of Agricultural Products Act*.

Plants that process less than 50 litres per day of milk from any dairy species are licensed by Alberta Health Services. Plants that process 50 litres or more of raw cows’ milk per day are licensed by Alberta Milk. All processing plants that process milk from sheep, goats or other dairy species are licensed by ARD.

The sale of raw milk is illegal anywhere in Canada.

Milk that has not been pasteurized is termed “raw milk.” The sale of raw milk is illegal. You can sell raw milk, farm-separated cream or a product produced from raw milk or farm-separated cream only to a licensed processor. Cheese made from raw milk that is manufactured in compliance with the *Food and Drugs Act* is exempt from this provision. The use of the term “sale” includes trading, bartering and giving without expectation of compensation. Providing milk free of charge is considered to be “selling” milk.

The scope of the Dairy Industry Regulation establishes standards for the safe handling of milk and the construction, maintenance and operation of the dairy barn, milk parlour, milk house and processing plants.

The term “sale” includes trading, bartering and giving without expectation of compensation. Providing milk free of charge is considered to be “selling” milk.

## Livestock and Livestock Products Act and Regulations

The *Livestock and Livestock Products Act* focuses on the regulation of the poultry, egg and honey industry in Alberta. Under the Honey Grading Regulation, honey sold directly to a consumer by the beekeeper at the beekeeper's honey house or residence or at a farmers' market does not need to be graded.

The Purchase and Sale of Eggs and Processed Egg Regulation allows a producer to sell uninspected, ungraded eggs directly to consumers for their own personal use if all the following conditions are met:

- the eggs are produced on your own farm
- the eggs are clean, have no visible cracks and are not leaking
- the eggs are kept at an ambient temperature of 7° C or less
- the eggs are packed in clean containers that are conspicuously labelled with the word "UNINSPECTED" in letters that are at least 2 centimetres in height

As a farm direct marketer, you cannot sell uninspected, ungraded eggs for use in restaurants, hospitals or institutions, to caterers, to owners of bed and breakfasts for use in their breakfasts or to bakers and processors at the farmers' market who will use them as an ingredient in their baking destined for sale at the farmers' market.

Farm direct marketers cannot sell uninspected, ungraded eggs for use in restaurants, hospitals, institutions or catered meals.

Uninspected, ungraded eggs cannot be used by the producer as an ingredient in a product destined for sale to the end consumer. For example, you cannot make pickled eggs for sale at a farmers' market if you are using uninspected, ungraded eggs.

For more information on the legislation that affects the sale of poultry and poultry products, see the ARD publication *Farm Direct Marketing: Know the Regulations – Poultry and Poultry Products, Agdex 844-5*.

## Livestock Industry Diversification Act and Regulation

The *Livestock Industry Diversification Act* (LIDA) gives authority to farm deer, elk and moose (commonly known as cervids) in Alberta and prescribes what animal products may be sold. A producer must be licensed by ARD to operate a cervid production farm, and each animal must be registered and identified. Handling facilities and fencing must meet the requirements before a licence is issued. Under the legislation, all game animals must be slaughtered in a licensed facility.

## *Marketing of Agricultural Products Act and Regulations*

The *Marketing of Agricultural Products Act* provides the framework for agricultural marketing boards and commissions. The Act establishes an agency, the Agricultural Products Marketing Council, to oversee the establishment and operation of agricultural marketing boards and commissions. Within the parameters of the legislation, each commodity board or commission develops a set of governing regulations. The Act specifies several different levels of regulation-making and administrative order-making abilities.

There are three main regulations governing each agricultural marketing board or commission.

### **Plan Regulation**

Any producer organization that is interested in forming an agricultural marketing board or commission is required to prepare a plan regulation. The plan sets the purpose, objectives and governance framework and guides the operation of the organization.

### **Authorization Regulation**

This Regulation sets out which of the powers in the Act may be used by the organization.

### **Agricultural Marketing Board or Commission Regulation**

This Regulation sets out the day-to-day operations of the agricultural marketing board or commission. It outlines how the producer organization is going to administer their plan and how the powers delegated to them from the Act are going to be used. It provides for licences, producer quotas, minimum prices, service charges and record keeping.

All agricultural marketing boards have a non-refundable status – that is, all producers must pay a non-refundable service charge. These boards represent supply-managed commodities. Supply management regulates and limits the production of a specific commodity using a licensing and quota system.

Non-quota birds can only be sold to the end consumer. For instance, they cannot be sold to restaurants to be used as an ingredient in menu items.

Alberta has seven agricultural marketing boards:

- Alberta Chicken Producers
- Alberta Hatching Egg Producers
- Alberta Milk
- Alberta Sugar Beet Growers
- Alberta Turkey Producers
- Alberta Vegetable (Processing) Growers
- Egg Farmers of Alberta

All agricultural marketing commissions have a refundable status – that is, all producers must pay a service charge that they can request to be refunded partially or fully. Agricultural marketing commissions do not manage production, but some organizations do have a licensing system.



Fourteen agricultural marketing commissions operate in Alberta:

- Alberta Barley Commission
- Alberta Beef Producers
- Alberta Canola Producers Commission
- Alberta Elk Commission
- Alberta Lamb Producers
- Alberta Oat Growers Commission
- Alberta Peace Region Forage Seed Growers
- Alberta Pork
- Alberta Pulse Growers Commission
- Alberta Wheat Commission
- Alfalfa Seed Commission
- Beekeepers Commission of Alberta
- Bison Producers of Alberta
- Potato Growers of Alberta

## *Meat Inspection Act and Regulation*

The *Meat Inspection Act* applies to all provincially licensed meat facilities. The Act regulates the slaughter, processing, preparing, packaging and storing of meat. It is illegal to sell or offer for sale uninspected meat.

It is not legal to sell uninspected meat or to even offer it for sale.

You can sell, offer for sale, transport or deliver meat to any person who is not a member of your immediate household only if all the following criteria are met:

- the animal must be inspected by a veterinarian or other appointed person
- inspection must take place both before and after slaughter
- the slaughter must take place at an abattoir
- the carcass must be found to be fit for consumption

A mobile butcher can slaughter your animal on your premises or assist you in slaughtering the animal, but this meat can only be used by you or members of your immediate household. This meat cannot be sold. Wild game can be processed at a licensed meat facility, but the meat is for use by the hunter and the hunter's household members only. Wild game meat cannot be used as an ingredient in meat products that are sold, such as sausages or jerky, because this meat has not been inspected.

For more information on the legislation that affects the sale of meat and meat products, see the ARD publication *Farm Direct Marketing: Know the Regulations – Meat and Meat Products, Agdex 844-4*.

## Food Safety

Consumers are increasingly seeking assurances that their food is being produced in a safe manner. In response to this consumer demand, industry and government are working together to develop process control systems that address food safety. These systems are based on the principles of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) and support Alberta's gate-to-plate approach to food safety.

Different food safety process control systems can help you provide assurances to your customers. These programs focus on preventing hazards rather than detecting problems during inspection of the end products. Maintaining appropriate documentation and records is an important element of all food safety systems because records provide an indication of whether the control measures are implemented effectively. Regardless of which program meets your needs, you need to develop written policies and/or procedures to ensure products are being produced safely.

## On-Farm Food Safety Programs

On-Farm Food Safety (OFFS) programs reduce the risk of unsafe food products originating from the farm. The programs help create a proper operational environment for food safety on the farm through the implementation of Good Production Practices (GPPs). These types of practices can be applied to any type of agricultural production operation.

The key practices are as follows:

- a thorough knowledge of the hazards and risks on the farm
- a good understanding of the GPPs recommended for the commodity and type of farming operation
- an effective written plan for the individual farm

Commodity associations are in varying stages of developing new codes of practice and programs for OFFS. These national standards programs are managed by producer groups and are voluntary for most commodities. For more information about On-Farm Food Safety programs, contact your provincial commodity association.

## Prerequisite Programs

Effective food safety systems are built on a solid foundation of prerequisite programs. These programs provide the basic environment and operating conditions that are necessary for the production of safe food. They include protocols for premises, storage and transportation, equipment, sanitation, food handling, personnel, product recall and traceability. Implementation of these control measures is encouraged before processing begins.

## Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point

The Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) system is a proactive program that is internationally recognized as an effective approach to food safety in processing facilities. HACCP requires an assessment of what food safety problems can occur at any stage of the process. Control measures are then identified to prevent, reduce or eliminate these hazards to an appropriate level to avoid adverse human health consequences.

While HACCP is still voluntary, many processors are choosing to develop and implement a food safety program using this system.

For more information on Prerequisite Programs and HACCP, contact the Safe Food and Animal Welfare Branch of Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development.

## Additional Resources

---

All federal legislation can be found on the website for the federal Department of Justice at: <http://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng>

Alberta's legislation is available to view or print for free on the provincial website for the Queen's Printer at: <http://www.qp.alberta.ca>

### Canadian Food Inspection Agency ([www.inspection.gc.ca](http://www.inspection.gc.ca))

Alberta North Office  
(north of Innisfail/Bowden)  
Tel: 780-395-6700

Alberta South Office  
(south of Innisfail/Bowden)  
Tel: 403-299-7680

### Alberta Health Services ([www.albertahealthservices.ca/eph.asp](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/eph.asp))

The general contact numbers for Alberta Health Services Zone offices:

North Zone, Environmental Public Health  
Grande Prairie – Tel: 780-513-7517

Edmonton Zone, Environmental Public Health  
Edmonton – Tel: 780-735-1800

Central Zone, Environmental Public Health  
Red Deer – Tel: 403-356-6366

Calgary Zone, Environmental Public Health  
Calgary – Tel: 403-943-2295

South Zone, Environmental Public Health  
Lethbridge – Tel: 403-388-6689

## **Additional Resources (continued)**

---

**Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development** ([www.agriculture.alberta.ca](http://www.agriculture.alberta.ca))

For toll-free calls in Alberta to Government of Alberta offices, dial 310-0000 followed by the area code and telephone number you wish to reach.

For information on other publications available from Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, go to [www.agric.gov.ab.ca/publications](http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/publications) or call 780-427-0391 (in Canada toll-free: 1-800-292-5697).

Alberta Ag-Info Centre provides access to specialists, information and services within Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development. Call toll-free in Alberta: 310 FARM (310-3276).

**Animal Health and Assurance Division**

Chief Provincial Veterinarian

Tel: 780-408-8345

Animal Health Branch

Tel: 780-427-6535

Inspection and Investigation Branch

Tel: 403-755-1474

**Rural Development Division**

Farmers' Market Program

Tel: 780-853-8223

**Food Safety and Animal Welfare Division**

Meat Inspection Branch

Tel: 780-422-2104

Safe Food and Animal Welfare Branch

Tel: 780-427-4054

**Crop Research and Extension Division**

Provincial Apiculturist

Tel: 780-415-2314